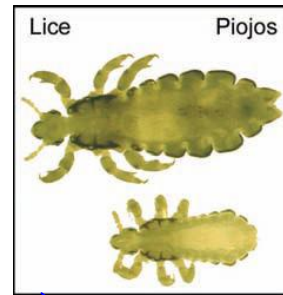


Head Lice Fact Sheet ---- No. 1

What are lice?

1. Lice, or Pediculosis (pe•dic•u•lo•sis), are small tan to grayish-white insects, about the size of a sesame seed and have six legs.
2. They don't usually carry disease, but can cause your child and family discomfort, stress and sometimes skin irritation.
3. Lice can live up to 30 days on a person's head and lay 8-10 eggs/day. To live, adult lice need to feed on blood every 3 to 6 hours. If the louse falls off a person, it dies within 2 days.



Head lice live on the head and rarely leave the body.

Head Lice Fact Sheet ---- No. 2

1. Itching is the first symptom of head lice, unless your child has a very light case. Check your child's head and scalp all over and especially behind the ears and near the neckline at the back of the neck when scratching begins.
2. Look for lice and their eggs or "nits." (See Fact Sheet #3 to find out about nits.) You may see the nits before you find a louse because each louse can lay up to 8-10/day.
3. You may first find lice or nits on the hairs at the "nape" of the neck (back of the head where the hair stops and the neck begins) and behind the ears. But, they can live anywhere; so, look all over the scalp.
4. If you know of another child with head lice, be alert that your child may contract lice, too. There is no incubation period. When live lice move from one child's head to another; they are "home" and can begin laying eggs immediately.
5. Children get head lice almost as much as the common cold. Millions get it at least one time, once a year.



6. Children get lice from other children. They move from child to child through head to head contact.
7. Lice cannot hop, jump or fly but can crawl from child to child anytime children are close together; during play or sports or even nap time.
8. Sharing combs, brushes, hair fasteners, hats, caps, coats, neck scarves and even head phones may spread them, too but this is less likely than direct head-to-head contact.

9. Children get lice more than teens or adults. ANY child can get head lice! It doesn't matter where they live or go to school; how much money they have; or, if boy or girl, black, white or brown.

10. A child isn't sick or unclean if they have head lice. Taking baths won't kill lice or keep children from getting lice. And, if a child has head lice, it certainly doesn't mean they have bad parents.

11. Dealing with lice is difficult, sometimes embarrassing and can be labor intensive to anyone caring for children. See Fact Sheet #3 for how to get rid of lice.

Head Lice Fact Sheet ---- No. 3

What should I do if I think my child has head lice?

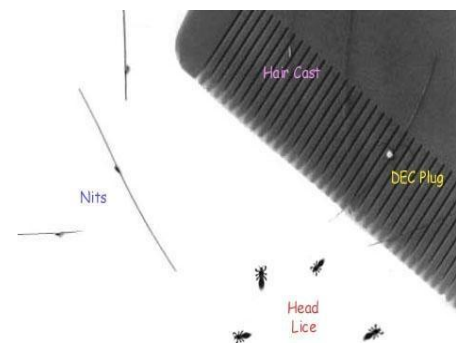


5. Nits are very tiny; about the size of a sesame seed. They are shaped like a long football, yellow to white in color and are often mistaken for dandruff or hair spray droplets. Dandruff and hair products can be easily moved on the hair shaft. Nits attach to a hair at the scalp with a waterproof, cement-like substance. That's why they can be difficult to remove and must be combed out and picked off.

6. You may find nits first on the hairs at the "nape" of the neck (back of the head where the hair stops and the neck begins) and behind the ears. But, they can live anywhere; so, look all over the scalp.

7. Even after thoroughly using the nit comb, live lice or nits could still be hiding somewhere on your child's head: check your child's head daily and continue to comb out nits for 7-10 days. All products specifically created to treat head lice will recommend a second treatment anywhere from 7 to 10 days after the first treatment in order to kill any remaining or newly hatched lice.

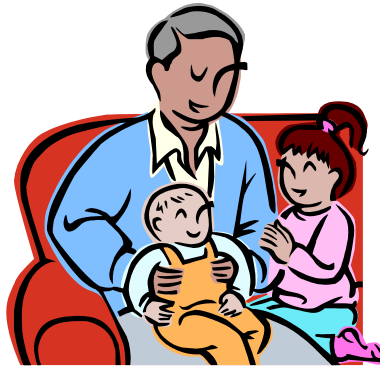
1. You can take care of your child's head lice problem at home without a visit to the doctor or clinic. Treatment should be with shampoo or cream rinse approved by the FDA that can be purchased without a prescription at the drug store, grocery store or other places that carry drug store products.
2. Many parents feel embarrassed when their child has lice. Sometimes it helps to talk to someone who can offer extra help. The Health Assistant at your child's school, your District Nurse, your physician and even the pharmacist can help.
3. After the first treatment, you may not see live lice but you might see nits. If the nits (or lice eggs) are attached to strands of hair $\frac{1}{4}$ inch or less from the scalp, they are probably not dead. This means live lice could still be living somewhere on your child's head; or, soon will hatch from the remaining eggs.
4. That's why, after treatment, it is important to comb out the nits left in your child's hair with a special nit comb available to pick up where you buy lice treatment.



Head Lice Fact Sheet ---- No. 4

How do I keep lice from coming back?

1. Carefully follow the directions on the lice treatment package. Not following directions, is the biggest reason why it doesn't work.
2. If your child has extra long hair (longer than shoulder length), you may need to use a second bottle. Pay special attention to instructions on the bottle about how to thoroughly work it into the hair, how long the medication should be left on and whether rinsing the hair is recommended after treatment.
3. Comb out the nits left after treatments. (See Fact Sheet #3 to learn about nits.) Do this by sliding a nit up the hair shaft with your fingers or using a nit comb. Special nit combs are available in the store where you bought the lice treatment.
4. Most of the time a second treatment is necessary. If you don't kill the nits, they will hatch and your child will have lice again- this time without any contact with another infested child! All products specifically created to treat head lice will recommend a second treatment and a second nit combing, anywhere from 7 to 10 days after the first treatment to kill any leftover lice and nits.
5. Launder clothing and bedding used during the 2 days before treatment in hot water (130 degrees Fahrenheit) to kill the lice. **CAUTION:** Do not bathe or shampoo in water this hot! THIS TEMPERATURE IS FOR LAUNDRY ONLY!



6. Dry cleaning kills lice and their nits in clothing that can't be washed.
7. Sealing clothing, stuffed toys, pillows, blankets or other small soft items, for two weeks in tightly closed plastic bags will kill both lice and nits! It's low cost, too.
8. Vacuum or sweep carpets, furniture and curtains to pick up any live lice or nits that may have fallen or crawled there.
9. Soak combs, brushes and some other washable items for one hour in one of the approved lice shampoos; or, soak them for 5 to 10 minutes in a pan of 130 degree hot water.
10. Teach your whole family about how lice is spread and treated. Teach your children not to share combs, brushes and other personal items with other children.
11. Check your child's hair from time to time for signs of lice. Catching it early can cut down the number of treatments, save time and money.

Head Lice Fact Sheet ---- No. 5

Myths, misconceptions and truths about head lice treatment



1. Using poisons or flammable liquids like gasoline, kerosene, and paint thinner or insect repellent may harm your child more than it would the lice. Chemicals should never be used unless they are approved by the FDA for the specific treatment of head lice.



2. Do not use hair dryers to kill lice or their eggs! The temperature would have to be turned up so high it could easily cause serious burns on the scalp. Burns occur when the hot dryer is either held too close to the scalp or pointed on each section too long!



3. Hair gels, hairspray, oils or other non-medicated hair products including dandruff shampoo will not kill lice or prevent eggs from hatching or sticking to the hair.

4. Home remedies like vinegar, and mayonnaise have not been scientifically proven to be effective.

5. Cutting your child's hair or shaving their head to get rid of lice won't keep them away, Lice stick to short and just "grown in" hair, too!



6. Lice don't hide in building cracks like cockroaches or sand boxes like other tiny insects. So treating homes or schools with bug sprays or other pesticides would waste money and may harm children and adults around the treated areas.



7. Your pets and other animals don't carry head lice and can't contract head lice from people.

8. Always check with your physician before using any new treatment or device "claiming to get rid of lice and nits." In most cases these are not yet proven and not yet approved by the FDA.



9. Medications that are FDA approved for head lice treatments, whether prescription or over-the-counter are safe and effective for children over the age of two. For children younger than two, check with your physician.

The Centers for Disease control and Prevention's Web site on head lice has more information about the specific medications found in head lice products.

